



United States Mint Gains Authority to Fine Companies That Misuse the Agency's Names, Symbols or Emblems

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WASHINGTON — The United States Mint is issuing a final regulation to help protect consumers and the coin-collecting hobby from the misuse of the Agency's names, emblems and symbols, as well as those of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The new regulation, approved by the Treasury Department, authorizes the United States Mint to assess civil fines against companies or individuals who misuse the Department of the Treasury's and the United States Mint's names and emblems in advertising, solicitations, business activities or products to convey a false impression of sponsorship, endorsement or association with the United States Mint or the Treasury Department.

"This regulation will not affect the vast majority of individuals and businesses selling coins or coin products," said United States Mint Director Ed Moy. "The rule will create a higher level of consumer awareness, by defending the integrity of the United States Mint's names, emblems, and symbols."

Businesses should check the guidelines on the United States Mint's Consumer Awareness web page at www.usmint.gov/consumer/. The United States Mint solicited public comment on the proposed rule, which was published in the Federal Register in January 2005. The authority for implementing this final rule is Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 333.

The United States Mint will now have the authority to impose a civil fine of up to \$5,000 against an individual or company for each misleading use of the United States Mint's or the Treasury Department's names, symbols, or emblems. Misuses in broadcasts and telecasts could incur especially stiff penalties of up to \$25,000 for each misuse.

The protections of due process in the new regulation include fair notice, an opportunity to respond and present evidence, and the right of appeal to an appropriate Federal District Court.

The new regulation appears on the United States Mint Web site at <http://www.usmint.gov/consumer/index.cfm?action=HotItems/>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

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